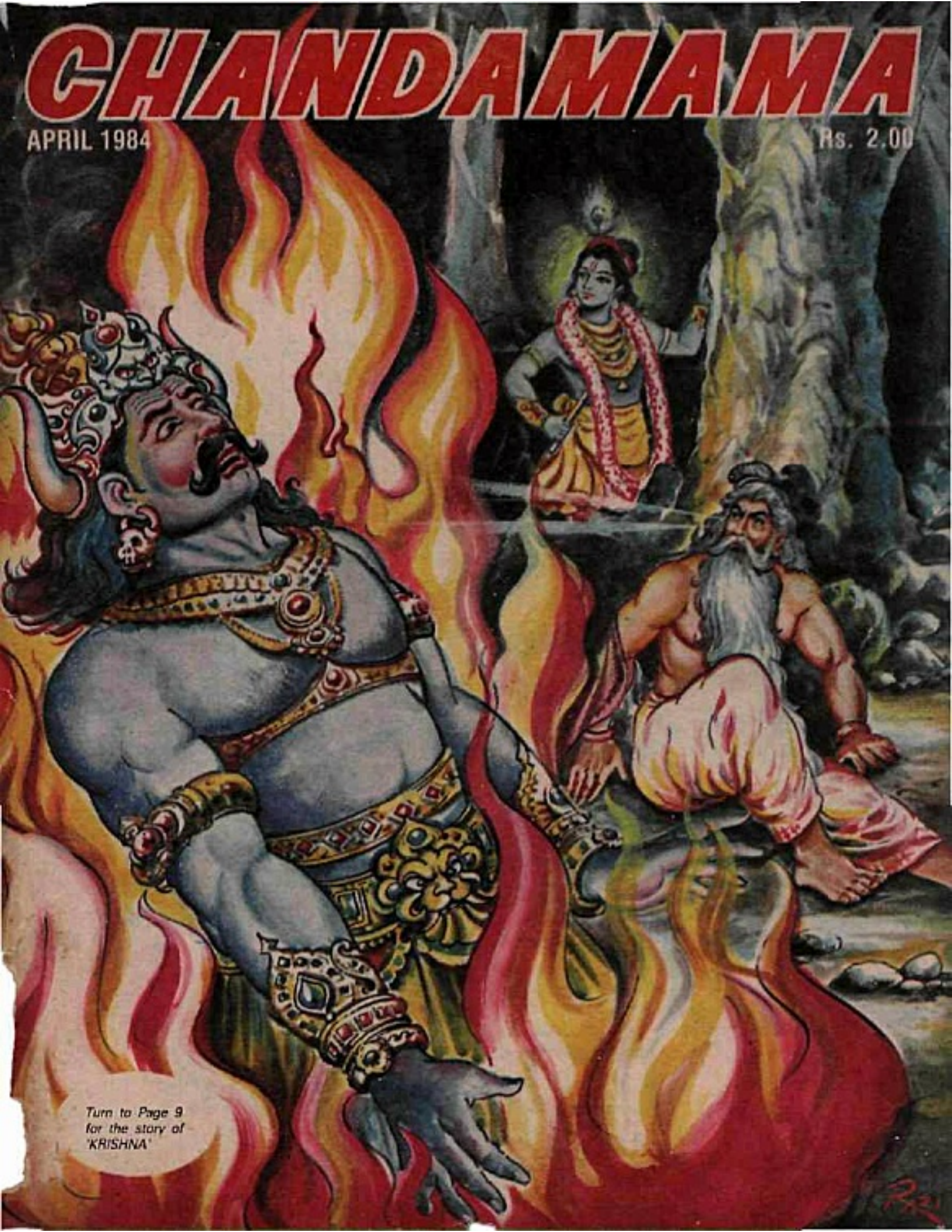


# CHANDAMAMA

APRIL 1984

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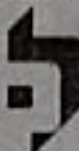


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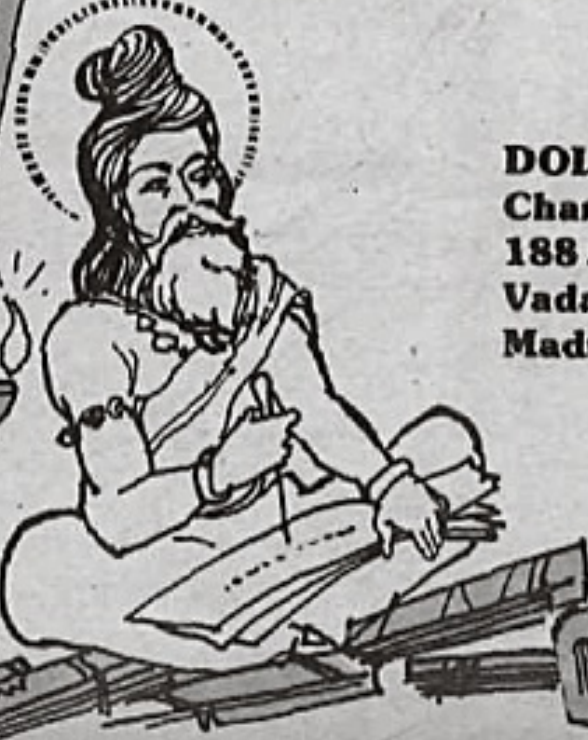
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- \* *A Great Friendship – in the Story of Krishna*
- \* *The Best Treatment – Towards a Brighter Personality*
- \* *The Perfect Match – An Arabian Night Story*
- \* *The Odd Man Out – in the feature Unsolved Mysteries*
- \* *The Difference – A Legend of India*
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**AND Newsflash, Contests, Let us Know and More!**





## Tales of Nasruddin

Once we had informed you about Nasruddin for whom a statue was raised, some time back, in the city of Bukhara.

Numerous are the stories that go round in the name of this unusual personality—who can be compared to Birbal, Tenali Raman and Gopal Bhand of India. The Nasruddin stories have amused, entertained and educated people for generations.

Beginning with our next issue we will serialise *Tales of Nasruddin* through pictures—a complete story each time.

You can look forward to an absorbing series.

## THE RESULTS OF JANUARY '84 CONTEST

The prize-winners are: Mukta Agrawal, Bombay, Aranthai Raju, Arantangi and R. Karthik, Rishi Valley.

### GOLDEN WORDS OF YORE

लोकयात्रा नयो लज्जा दाक्षिण्यं त्यागशीलता ।

पञ्च यत्र न विद्यन्ते न तत्र विवसं वसेत् ॥

*Lokayātrā nayo lajjā dākṣiṇyam tyāgaśīlatā*

*Pañca yatra na vidyante na tatra divasam vaset.*

One should not pass even a day at a place which is bereft of the five factors: means of livelihood, a code of conduct, the sense of shame, compassion and the spirit of sacrifice.

*The Hitopadesha*



# PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



S.G. Seshagiri



Mohan Kumar Sharma

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? If yes, you may write it on a post card and mail to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama, to reach us by 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs.50/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

---

The Prize for February '84 goes to:—

Miss R.V. Anjana, C/o, Mr. R.G. Vaidyanath,  
Judges Quarters, Narayanpur, Dharwar-580 008.

The Winning Entry:— 'Rhythmic Beating' & 'Enigmatic Thinking'

---

## PICKS FROM THE WISE

A sleeping fox counts hens in his dreams

—Russian Proverb.

Better an open enemy than a false friend.

—English Proverb.

The mother of the coward does not worry about him.

—Arabic Proverb.



# NEWS-FLASH

## A Pat for Pets

Is there a dog or a cat or a mongoose or a bird as a pet in your home? Good, if there is. In a recent conference of experts of man-animal relationship held at Gothenburg in Sweden a research scholar said that keeping a pet means to keep away several diseases of heart as well as circulatory disorders. His report asserted, "Domestic pets had a salutary effect on the well-being of human beings, and they were perhaps the best means of making rich and sound the lives of persons living in sterile modern environments."



## Animals Predict Quake

A book just published shows how a study of animal behaviour can inform us of earthquakes to occur. The book is *Forecasting Earthquakes* by H.N. Srivastava, Director of Seismology in India.

If rats suddenly rush to their burrows, cats disappear from roads and horses get restless, know that a quake is coming. Better inform the Seismology Department.

In Japan innumerable rats were seen every day in restaurants in Nagoya city but they disappeared in the evening prior to the Nobi earthquake of 1891.

Giving more examples, Dr. Srivastava says that in the Tientsin region of China, chickens refused to enter their dens, tigers became restless, yaks declined to eat, and horses and sheep started running restlessly a few hours before the earthquake of July 18, 1969.

In Yugoslavia, birds in zoo started crying before the 1955 earthquake. Deer gathered and cat disappeared from villages in northern Italy two hours before a damaging quake in 1976.







## LET US KNOW

***Why is Kashmir called "Switzerland of India?"***

—S.P. Solayappan, Sidapur.

Let us quote from the book entitled *Kashmir: The Switzerland of India* by Dermont Norris.

"The European will find Kashmir delightful, not only because of its pleasant climate, but also for the variety of amusements that it has to offer. If he is an artist, there is work for his brush at every turn. There is no day in the year on which the sportsman will not be able to amuse himself. The botanist has ranges of upland hillsides, which are studded with scores of varieties of wild-flowers..."

As Switzerland in Europe is charming for its hills and lakes, so is Kashmir in India. Kashmir is also known as "the Land of Celestial Charms" and "the Paradise on Earth."

***Why did King Vikramaditya have to carry the corpse? Why did the corpse possessed by the Vampire fly back again and again?***

—S. Rajini, Coimbatore.

A tantrik had set the king to fetch the corpse for a certain ritual. The king was expected to keep mum, but the provocative questions made him speak. As the condition of silence was broken, the vampire slipped away. However, the vampire at last was pleased with the king's wisdom and endeavour and warned him against the evil design of the tantrik.

***Readers are welcome to send such queries on culture, literature or general knowledge which should be of interest to others too, for brief answers from the Chandamama.***



*(Story so far: The eventful Childhood of Krishna culminated in the death of the tyrant of Mathura, Kamsa. Krishna and Balarama thereafter had their education in the Ashram of Sage Sandeepani at the end of which Krishna restored to the guru his son lost to a sea-demon.)*

## KAL YAVAN'S MISADVENTURE

**K**rishna and Balarama returned to Mathura, but only to face new problems. Kamsa was no more, but Jarasandha, his father-in-law, the mighty monarch of Magadha, resolved to avenge his death. He forgot that Kamsa's death was the result of his own wickedness.

An amazing chain of events

had marked Jarasandha's birth. His father, Vrihadratha, had received a magic fruit from a sage. He had been assured that his queen will give birth to a heroic son upon consuming the fruit.

But Vrihadratha had two wives and he had promised the fruit to both. He now divided







the fruit between the two. The result was bizarre: each queen gave birth to a perpendicularly half child. Disgusted, the king ordered both the halves to be thrown away in the cremation ground and it was done. A little later an ogress named Jara saw them and joined them. The child, now whole, at once began to cry.

The cry attracted the attention of the passers-by and the king himself rushed to the spot. The ogress Jara handed over the child to him. The child was Jarasandha—or one who had been joined by Jara.

Jarasandha, in due course,

grew famous as a highly crafty fighter. He was not afraid of anybody because very few knew that the only way to kill him was to tear him into halves.

When Krishna learnt that he was preparing to attack Mathura, he understood that a long harassment awaited his people. He did not wish them to suffer. Far away, in the solitude of the sea-coast, he chose a place and began shifting the citizens of Mathura to that safe location. Soon a charming new city came into being that was to be famous as Dwaraka.

And true to Krishna's anticipation, Jarasandha attacked Mathura again and again. He was repelled every time, but that did not humble him. He inspired a friend of his called Kal Yavan, the terror of kings and heroes, to rise against Krishna.

By the time Kal Yavan arrived in Mathura, the people of the old kingdom were safe in their new-found Dwaraka. Krishna alone was waiting for him.

The giant-like hero, wielding a huge mace in one hand and a menacing sword in the other, approached the deserted city. In



no time his eyes fell on Krishna and his muscles grew tense and his eyes piercing.

But Krishna turned and began striding away in the opposite direction. "Is he afraid of me?" wondered Kal Yavan. He followed Krishna.

Krishna looked back and, at the sight of Kal Yavan pursuing him, speeded up. Kal Yavan too increased his pace. By and by both began to run. Krishna made it possible for Kal Yavan to even touch him from time to time, but he gave him the slip every time.

The race seemed to be coming to an end, for there were

hills on the horizon. It certainly won't be easy for Krishna, who looked quite delicate when compared to Kal Yavan, to cross the hills easily. His speed will be checked and then it will be for his pursuer to wreak his vengeance on him. Kal Yavan looked happy with the prospect.

But coming closer to the hills, Kal Yavan stood puzzled for a moment. Where did Krishna disappear? He looked to his left and looked to his right, again and again; in his anger he even uprooted a rock in front of him. But where was his enemy?

A little more searching showed him a tunnel. He en-





tered it, now sure to find the object of his pursuit.

The tunnel led to a cave with its other side opening up into a patch of green meadow. In the mild light Kal Yavan saw someone lying on the floor with dry grass for his bed.

"Krishna!" shouted Kal Yavan, gasping and panting. The shout shook the cave and raised multiple echoes. But not even a ripple was noticed on the closed eyelids of the sleeping figure.

Kal Yavan gave out a roaring laugh. "Feigning slumber, eh? Ha ha! Can you deceive me so easily?" he said and then planted a heavy kick on the sleeping man's chest. He waited to see whether that was the end of the man or there was still some strength left in him to sit up.

But Kal Yavan had hardly any time to see! The sleeping man looked at him in the process of sitting up. Two flickers from his angry eyes at once reduced Kal Yavan to ashes.

The man was Muchukunda, a great king who had once crushed several gangs of demons that were on a rampage endangering the peace of the earth. When the gods offered him a boon, all he wanted was the opportunity to sleep undisturbed for as long as he pleased.

His boon was granted along with the condition that whoever disturbed his sleep would go up in flames upon meeting his eyes.

Krishna had never provoked Kal Yavan to come to fight with him. The proud king came of his own and met his end without Krishna having to engage him in a duel.







Prize Winning Entry — No.1

## IT PAYS TO BE QUADRUPLETS

**I**n Shanghai lived four brothers. They were quadruplets or born of the same mother at the same time. Their names were Chang, Chong, Ching and Chung.

They had strange powers. Chang could draw into his mouth a whole river and hold the water for a few minutes. Chong had the power to come out of a fire without even losing a hair. Ching had an iron neck that could resist any sword. And Chung could not die even when rolled down a hill.

All the four looked alike.

One day Chang had drawn all the water of the river Yangze

when a greedy man saw some pearls lying on the river-bed. He went in and began collecting them. Chang signalled to him to get away, but the fellow did not listen. How long could Chang hold the water in his mouth? He had to let it out! The pearl-collector got drowned.

Chang was led to the king who ordered his soldiers to throw him into fire.

"Can I go and take leave of my family?" asked Chang. The king had no objection to it. In those days nobody tried to escape any punishment given by the king.

Next day who came to be thrown into the fire was not Chang but Chong. Nobody except their mother could tell the difference.

The soldiers hurled Chong into a big fire, but he stood amidst the flames singing and even laughing. A full hour pas-



sed and the flames subsided, but Chong stood unscathed.

The soldiers reported to the king that Chong was entirely fire-proof.

"Hang him!" said the king.

"That should be all right, my lord, but let me return tomorrow," said Chong. The king agreed.

The one to come the next day was Ching. The soldiers carried him to the platform for execution and hanged him. But to their great surprise, they found Ching hanging happily and talking of weather. Hours passed. There was not even a scratch on Ching's iron neck.

The soldiers reported to the king what happened. "Carry him to the hill-top and roll him down!" said the king.

"I shall be back tomorrow, my lord," said Ching. The king consented.

Ching went home and sent Chung.

The soldiers led him up a hill and threw him down. He whistled and merrily rolled on and sprang to his feet upon reaching the ground.

"Well, well, if this chap won't die, why not let him live?" said the king.

The four brothers lived happily.

—R. Karthik





## How Jojo Learnt His Lessons

Once upon a time in a forest lived a rabbit family with a baby rabbit named Jojo. There were many other rabbit families in the forest and they too had young rabbits.

An old rabbit taught the young ones in a school. Jojo was duly admitted there. But he bunked the school and played all day long. He had collected quite a few other naughty rabbit-kids to play with him.

One day the king of rabbits decided to throw a grand feast for the little rabbits, for he was

very happy that they were getting educated. He told the teacher to come to his castle with all the students. The teacher asked his students to inform even those students who had not come to the school.

So, some of the little rabbits went to Jojo's house to inform him of the royal invitation.

But Jojo was playing away his time somewhere else!

The little rabbits wrote a note for him and left it on his bed.

In the evening Jojo returned home and saw the note. But





how can one who hardly attended the school read a note? He thought it to be a scrap of paper that had been blown into his room by the wind. He let the wind carry it—throwing it out through his window.

Next day Jojo was playing near a stream when he heard joyous shouts and songs. He got curious. He looked out and saw all the little rabbits coming from somewhere brightly dressed and each carrying a gift-packet with him or her.

"Where did you get such excellent clothes and packets?" Jojo hobbled forward and asked them.

"Why Jojo, did you not know

about the royal invitation? We were fed with such delicious dishes that we cannot describe them, and were given new clothes and other gifts! Of course we left a note on your bed!"

"Hm." The poor Jojo could not say a thing more. He was ashamed of the fact that he had not been able to read the note!

The very next day he went to school and played only when there was no class. He learnt his lessons quickly. When the king's invitation came again the next year, he was not deprived of his share of the feast and the gifts.

—Mukta Agrawal.





## TWO LETTERS

*What is creative attitude?*

“Grandpa, you were once saying that one ought to develop a creative attitude to life. What did you mean by that?” asked Reena.

Grandpa Chowdhury sat with his eyes closed for a minute. “Well,” he began. “Once I received two letters from two of my students. They wrote from the same town, on the same day. It had been a bad time for them. There had been a riot in their town. Both had the misfortune to see rowdism, vulgarity and violence at their worst manifestation.”

Grandpa recollected the first letter. It said: “Sir, where are we going? Looking at man’s brutality towards man, I have lost faith in everything. I have begun to hate all men—including myself.”

The second one said: “The last few days have been an experience of nightmare for me.



I realise how far mankind has to go in order to arrive at a truly civilised condition. We have to depend on our inner strength to prevail on our impulse and violent passions; we have to ardently pray to God to help us. Indeed, we must gird up our loins and go a long way.”

The grandpa paused and said, “Need I point out which of the two letters bore the sign of a creative attitude to life?”

“No, it is clear,” said Rajesh. “The first letter, breathed an air of despair and cynicism. The second one recognised the bad state of things all right, but it bore the stamp of a great quali-



ty. Yes, a robust optimism.”

“Right, my child. We cannot do anything in life without optimism. I cannot even speak to you unless I have the faith that you will pay some attention to me. You will not put a question to me unless you believe that I will at least try to answer you. So, to cultivate a sound sense of optimism is the creative attitude in life,” said Grandpa.

A little later Prof. Chowdhury recounted a dialogue the great inventor Thomas Edison had with a gentleman. Edison, as ever, was keeping very busy with an invention. But he was

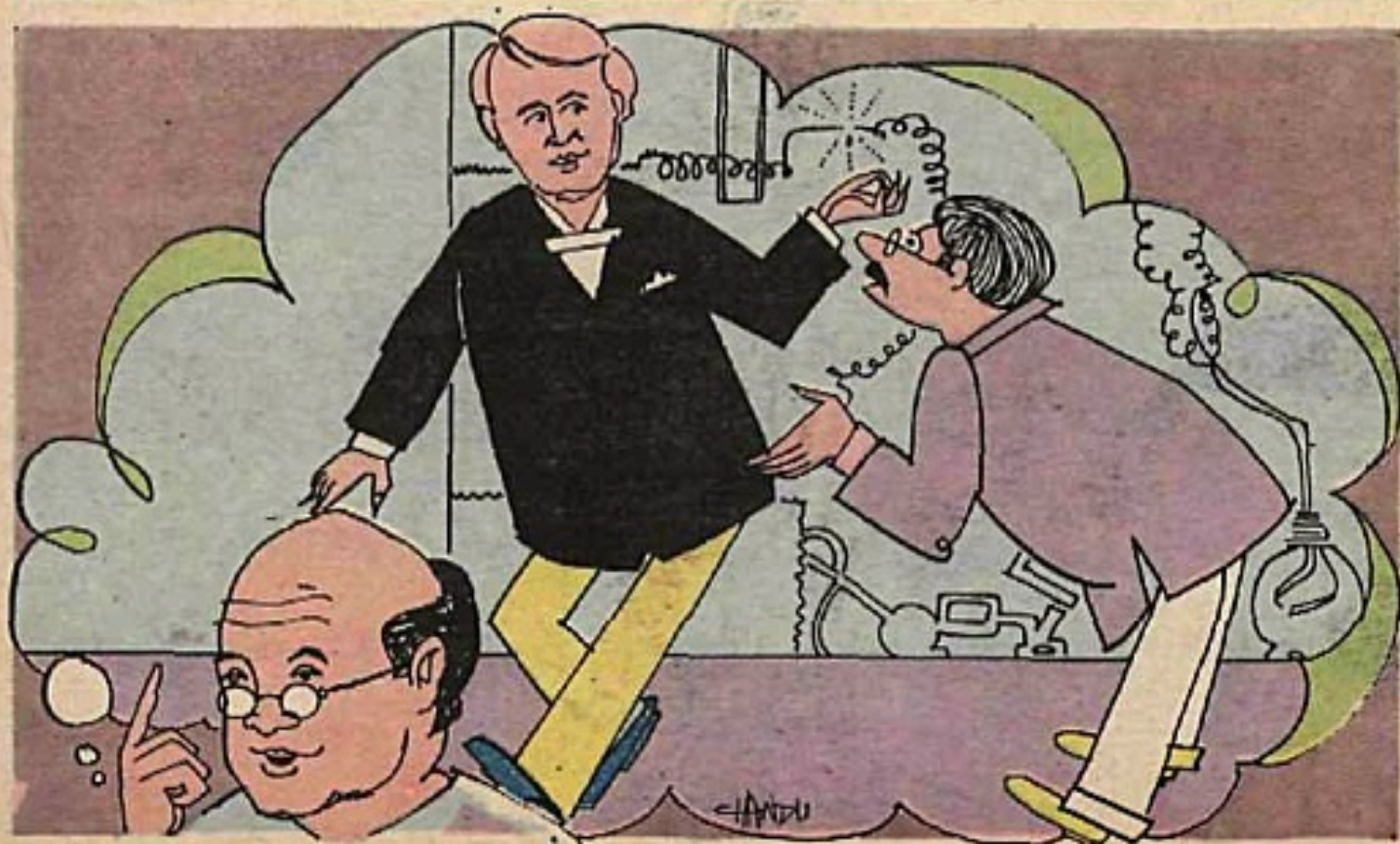
unable to solve a certain problem concerning it.

One day Edison came out of his workshop all smiles.

“You solved the problem, did you?” asked a gentleman, a friend of his.

“Not at all! All seems to have gone wrong. I have to begin all over again!” replied Edison.

Grandpa concluded, saying: “Edison was smiling at the prospect of beginning the experiment once again, when most people would have felt disgusted or bored. Edison knew the joy of work and that was because of his creative attitude to life.”





# MOBY DICK

(Ishmael has decided to go whaling, only to go whaling, only to discover he had signed on with a half mad captain named Ahab, whose only aim in life is to destroy the white whale, Moby Dick, which has been responsible for his losing a leg. Already on this trip Moby Dick has nearly killed Ahab. Now Ahab closes in on him for the second time.)



All except Starbuck were swayed by his words and we agreed to give further chase to the whale. That evening was a busy one, full of the sound of hammers and the hum of grindstones as the men toiled preparing their boats and sharpening their weapons. Late the following day we sighted Moby Dick again.

In due course the boats were lowered. Standing in his own boat, Ahab turned and waved at Starbuck who was standing on the deck of the Pequod. "For the third time my soul starts upon a voyage after Moby Dick. Wish me luck, Starbuck." "Do not go, my captain," cried Starbuck, "for I fear only the worst."



As Ahab's boat leaped away a number of sharks rose from the dark waters beneath his hull, maliciously snapping at the blades of the oars every time they dipped into the water. In this way they accompanied the boats with their bites.



We rowed on until suddenly the waters swirled in broad circles. A low rumbling sound was heard and then a vast form appeared. Shrouded in a thin, dropping veil of water, it hovered for a moment and then fell swamping back into the deep.

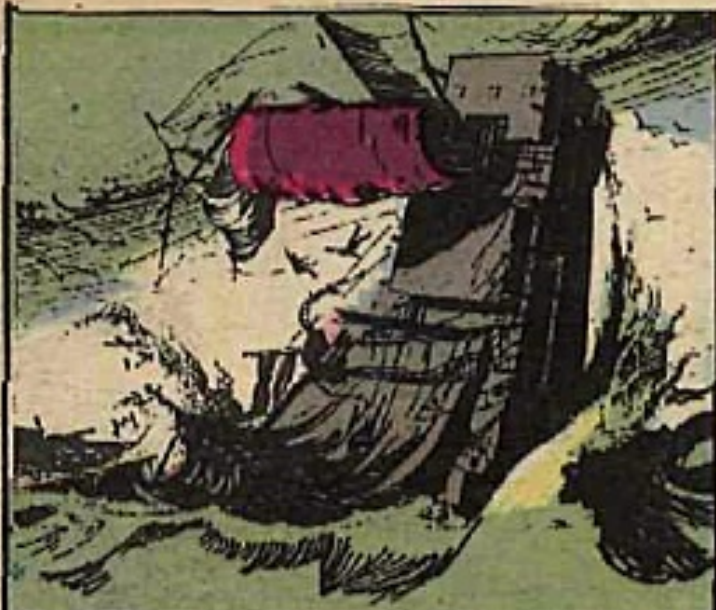


The boats darted forward to the attack, but maddened by the irons which corroded in him, Moby Dick seemed possessed by some unholy fury. He came towards us head on. Turning his tail among the boats he flailed them apart with such force that they were put out of action. Only Ahab's boat in which I sat was almost without a scar.



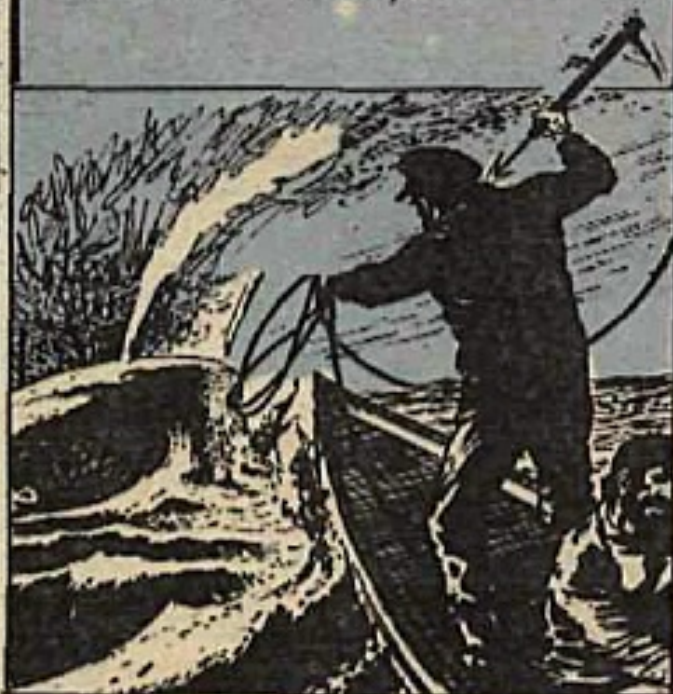
Suddenly sighting a ship nearby, and perhaps thinking it was a larger boat, the whale bore down upon it. The solid white buttress of its forehead struck the ship's starboard until men and timbers reeled. Some fell flat upon their faces and water poured like a great mountain torrent into the gaping breach which the whale had made.





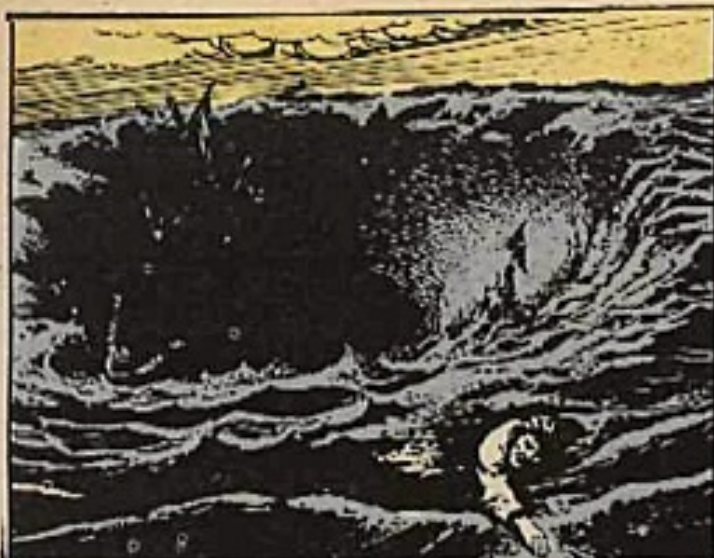
The damage done to the ship by this unholy whale was such that it immediately began to founder. With incredulous horror we watched it slide with ever increasing speed into the vast vortex it had created in its death throes.

My comrades were sucked one by one into the vortex to join Captain Ahab in a watery grave. Happily, by some divine providence, the vortex had subsided to a creamy pool by the time I was drawn to it and I was to keep afloat—the sole survivor of the crew of the Pequod.



The whale flew forward and the line ran out, then ran foul. Ahab stooped to clear it, but the flying rope caught him round the neck and he was shot out of the boat before any of us who sat there quite realised what had happened.





Before diving for the last time, the stricken whale's fin smashed against us, and we too were thrown into the water. Gradually, I found myself being drawn into the vortex left by the lost Pequod.



A coffin made by a carpenter for some future departing soul bobbed up from the depths beside me and I hurled myself on to it with the last of my strength.

My comrades were sucked one by one into the vortex to join Captain Ahab in a watery grave. Happily, by some divine providence, the vortex had subsided to a creamy pool by the time I was drawn to it and I was to keep afloat—the sole survivor of the crew of the Pequod.



Buoyed up by that coffin for almost one whole day and night I floated on the dirge like main, the unharmed sharks glided past as if with padlocks on their mouths. On the second day a sail drew near and a ship picked me up at last—an orphan of the sea and the only witness to the end of Captain Ahab and the great white whale.



—The End—





*New Tales of King  
Vikram and the Vampire*

## The Yogi's Double Standard

**D**ark was the night and fearful the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. At intervals of thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of ghosts. Flashes of lightning showed fearful faces.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought the corpse down. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse observed, "O King, have you been set on this dangerous mission by some yogi? If so, know that their behaviour is always unpredictable. Let me give you an example. Pay attention to it. That might bring you some relief."

The vampire went on: On the verge of a forest on the river Mahanadi lived a yogi known as Shivacharya. People came from





far and near to learn philosophy and yoga from him, but he did not accept all who came. He chose his disciples with care.

At a time he had no more than a dozen students living with him. They had to observe many rules of discipline.

Once he had in his Ashram a student named Prashant, son of a rich man. One day Prashant was returning to the Ashram from his home in the town. Rain came when he was crossing the forest. He lost his way and strayed into a far corner of the forest. He would have faced great difficulty had not a young man come to his rescue.'

The young man, whose name was Sundarsingh, lived in the forest with his kinsmen. His forefathers too were forest-dwellers.

Sundarsingh led Prashant to his hut. It rained heavily and Prashant had to pass the night in the hut. The two young men sat near a fire and Prashant heard from Sundarsingh how they hunted and how they lived. The two became friends. Prashant stayed on there for the next day and then returned to the Ashram.

Shivacharya went to the locality once in a fortnight or so, to spend some time with his disciples who were living as householders. Whenever he was out, Prashant left the Ashram and went to live with his new-found friend.

One day the guru returned to his Ashram a day earlier than he was expected to return. Prashant was not there. When the young man was back, the guru asked, "Where had you been?"

"Master, on the river-bank there is a deserted temple. I find the place very suitable for meditation. At times I spend a day or night meditating there undis-



turbed," replied Prashant.

The guru did not say anything. A month passed. It appeared that the guru had no plan to go anywhere in the near future. Prashant felt impatient to meet his friend. One day he said to Shivacharya, "Master, can I go and spend a day in that temple?"

"You had not sought my permission beforehand when you went there. What is the necessity of seeking it now?" asked the guru.

Prashant told his fellow-students that the guru had no objection to his going to spend a day elsewhere. He went out.

It was evening. Shivacharya followed Prashant quietly. Prashant walked very fast to reach his friend before it became late. He did not look back.

The guru observed Prashant meeting his friend. From a hiding he saw Prashant taking such food with his friend which the students in his Ashram were not expected to take. Prashant drank wine too. What was worse, the guru understood from their conversation that Prashant had joined Sundarsingh in looting travellers.



"Prashant!"

The guru's voice surprised the young man. He stood up and bowed to Shivacharya.

"I followed you personally because I did not wish anybody else to know what you were doing. You need not return to the Ashram. Go back home. I will inform your father accordingly," said the guru.

"Pardon me, Master, I am not a bad boy, though bad company caused some bad habits to develop in me," said Prashant.

"I have told you my decision." Shivacharya turned and headed for his Ashram.

"What to do?" Prashant whis-



pered to his friend. "This fellow will spoil my reputation!"

Sundarsingh picked up an axe and silently followed Shivacharya. Both had gone only a furlong when suddenly Sundarsingh sprang forward and swung his axe. A leopard that was stealthily coming towards Shivacharya along the branch of a big tree got killed.

The yogi stopped. Sundarsingh at once prostrated himself to him. The yogi asked, "My boy! What can I do for you?"

"Master, be kind to me and enroll me as your disciple," proposed Sundarsingh.

The yogi stood with his eyes closed for a moment. Then he

said, "All right. Follow me."

Sundarsingh fell at the yogi's feet once again. Then both resumed their journey.

The vampire paused for a moment and then demanded of King Vikram in a challenging tone: "O King, isn't the yogi's conduct questionable? It appeared that Sundarsingh followed the yogi to kill him at a hint from his friend. If he killed the leopard, it was because the leopard was a danger not only to the yogi but also to himself. Couldn't the yogi understand this? Prashant had been spoilt by Sundarsingh. How is it that while expelling Prashant from the Ashram the yogi accepted as





his disciple the chap who had spoiled him? Is it because Sundarsingh saved his life that he could not say no to him? Besides, should he not have given another chance to Prashant? Is he not guilty of double standard? Answer me if you can, O King. If you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answer, your head would roll off your neck."

Forthwith replied King Vikram: "Sundarsingh did not follow the yogi to kill him. Had that been his motive, he could have killed him even after killing the leopard. Rather we should suppose that he followed him lest otherwise Prashant himself will follow and kill the yogi. To eat a certain kind of food, to drink and even to loot the travellers were a natural part of Sundarsingh's way of

life. Prashant not only came from a civilised society, but also had been privileged to learn higher ideals from the yogi. For him it was a degradation and betrayal of the guru's faith. While Prashant had been spoilt under Sundarsingh's influence, under Prashant's influence Sundarsingh had been inspired to learn and be a better man. So far as Prashant is concerned, the yogi had given him a chance to refrain from his habit when he indirectly disapproved of his going out of the Ashram. Prashant did not respect the guru's sentiment. With his insight the guru understood that there was no need to waste his time on Prashant any longer."

No sooner had the king concluded his reply than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.

- —Devapriyo





## THE THREE PETS

There was a young man who had three pets: a mongoose, a cat and a dog. The young man was poor, but he never ate without sharing his food with the three animals.

One day while ambling in the forest the mongoose found a glittering ring. He brought it to his master.

The young man put the ring on his finger and said, "A man who wears such a beautiful ring should live in a royal mansion!"

Lo and behold, at once a

mansion cropped up around him. He understood that he had got hold of the wish-fulfilling ring.

He became rich, but he was kind to his neighbours. His fame reached the king who paid him a visit. Charmed by the young man's behaviour, he gave his daughter in marriage to him.

The king had a wicked minister. The old man was very unhappy that an ordinary young man should have married the princess. One day he met the





princess and said, "My child, I've a feeling that your husband loves you no more!"

"But that is wrong! He loves me very much!" replied the princess.

The old minister nodded sceptically. "I'll not feel satisfied until he passes a test," he said.

"What kind of test you'd like to put him to?" asked the princess.

"You know very well that he has prospered because of his magic ring. He never parts with the ring. Do you think he will give it to you if you ask him for it?"

"I'm sure he will," asserted the princess.

True to her faith, her husband gave her the ring when she wanted to wear it. Proudly she summoned the minister into her room and said, "Here is the ring. Now judge for yourself whether my husband loves me or not!"

"Are you sure this is that ring?" the wicked man showed his doubts again.

The princess took the ring off her finger in her eagerness to prove its special features. The minister took it into his hand



and instantly put it on and wished to be whisked away from the spot. Then he wished a mansion to come up in the sea. He lived there.

The young man's mansion disappeared. He became poor again. The princess wept—not because she was reluctant to live poor but because it is due to her naivety that her husband lost the magic ring.

"Don't feel sad at all. I am as happy as I was!" her husband assured her.

The cat knew the misfortune that had come over her master. She heard from a certain bird that a new mansion had come





up in the sea.

One day she saw a fish caught in the net by a fisherman. The sea had receded because of ebb and the fish was troubled as a fish out of water ought to be!

The cat knew it was no ordinary fish, but a water-nymph who was moving about in the guise of a fish. Once caught in the net, she could not get back to her own form.

"I'll set you free, if you help me to reach the mansion in the sea," the cat proposed.

"I'll build a magic bridge to that mansion," promised the nymph.

The cat snapped the net. The

nymph, set free, built the bridge.

The cat reached the mansion and found the old minister lying asleep with the ring on his finger. She bit the finger. The panicky minister screamed and shook his paining hand violently. Since the ring sat loose on his thin finger, it fell off. The cat clamped her teeth on it and ran away. The bridge disappeared after she had crossed over to the land. She ran and ran and gave the ring back to the princess. As soon as the princess got the ring the mansion in the sea disappeared, drowning the wicked minister.

The young man got back his mansion and lived comfortably once again.

But a bandit chief got the secret of the magic ring. How to steal it became his sole thought. He chose the most faithful one of his followers and together with him climbed the upper floor of the mansion at the dead of night. He knew that the young man and his servants would have fallen fast asleep, because they had all kept awake till late in the night for a party.

A sharp dagger ready in his hand, the bandit chief was



advancing towards the young man's bed-chamber when, suddenly, he was flattened. It was the dog that had sprang upon him. The bandit chief struggled, but could not get up. The dog who had understood the intruder's motive finished him off. His assistant was trying to escape, but was caught by the servants.

The young man was so happy with his pets that he thought it was high time they were treated royally. He built three excellent rooms for them and appointed three full-time servants to look after them, one for each.

One day the servants quarrelled among themselves on the questions—which of the pets had served its master most. Well, each claimed that it was the pet under his charge that

was their master's biggest benefactor!

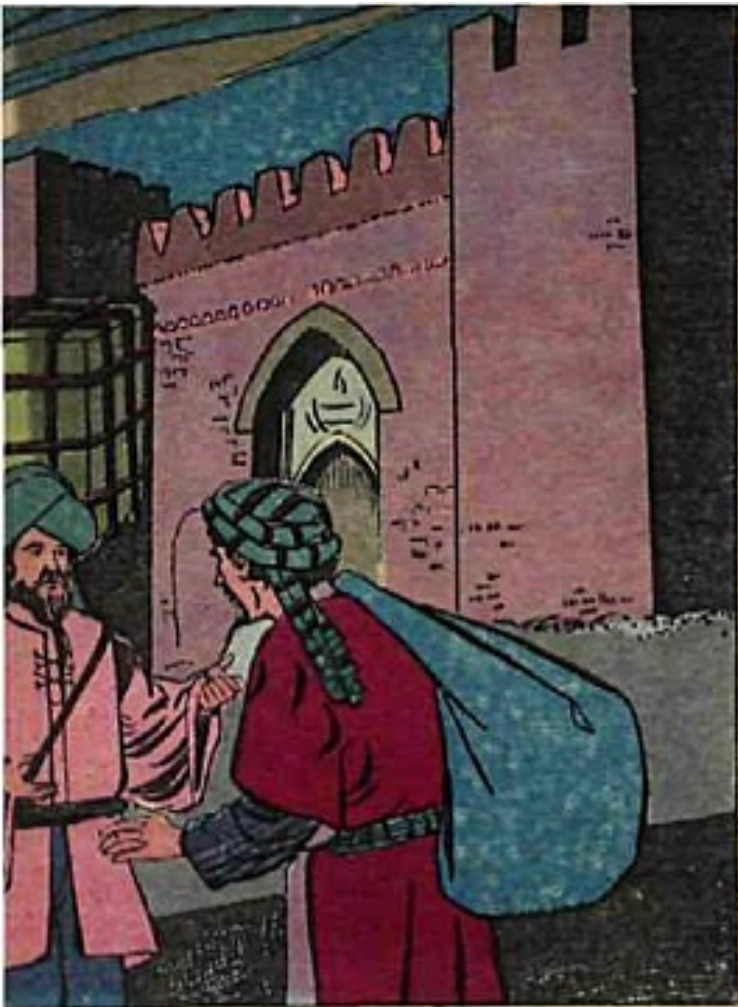
The young man who heard their quarrel asked the princess her opinion on the issue.

"The mongoose got the ring quite accidentally. The cat recovered it through some deliberate planning and bravery. Between the two the cat's service is greater. But the dog not only saved the ring, but also saved your life. So between the cat and the dog the dog's service is greater. That is to say, the dog is to be commended most. But we must remember that all the three creatures are full of love for you and that puts them in the same position," said the princess.

"You are right," agreed her husband.







## The Over-Cautious Merchant

**A** merchant was on his way to a certain city. The road was long and lonely. He was afraid of thieves.

One night he met two travellers in an inn. They too were on their way to the city. The merchant observed them for some time and understood that they were poor villagers and were going to the town in hope of getting some work. One was an old man and the other one his grandson, a teenager.

"It will be good if I have these two innocent men as my companions, for I have money and valuable goods with me," the merchant thought. He proposed

the same to the two travellers. They gladly agreed to walk with him.

The old man asked his grandson to carry the merchant's heavy bale from time to time. When the merchant slept, one of them sat awake guarding his bale.

It took them seven days to reach the city, but the city gates closed just before they could enter it. It was night.

The guards kept the city gates closed at night because the forest was not far and after the nightfall wild animals haunted the area.

The merchant was more afraid of the wild animals than bandits. He was anxious to find a shelter.

"We three will remain awake around a fire and surely no beast will venture to come near us," said the grandpa.



"No. I must climb this tower and spend the night on top of it," said the merchant, locating a deserted tower in ruins.

"But my grandpa cannot climb it and I cannot go with you leaving him alone here!" said the boy.

"Who is asking you to come? There will be no place for two persons to rest on the tower!" was the merchant's response.

"But won't it be better if we three are together in case we are attacked by a beast?" asked the grandpa.

"How can a beast attack me if I am on the tower?" the merchant asked in return.

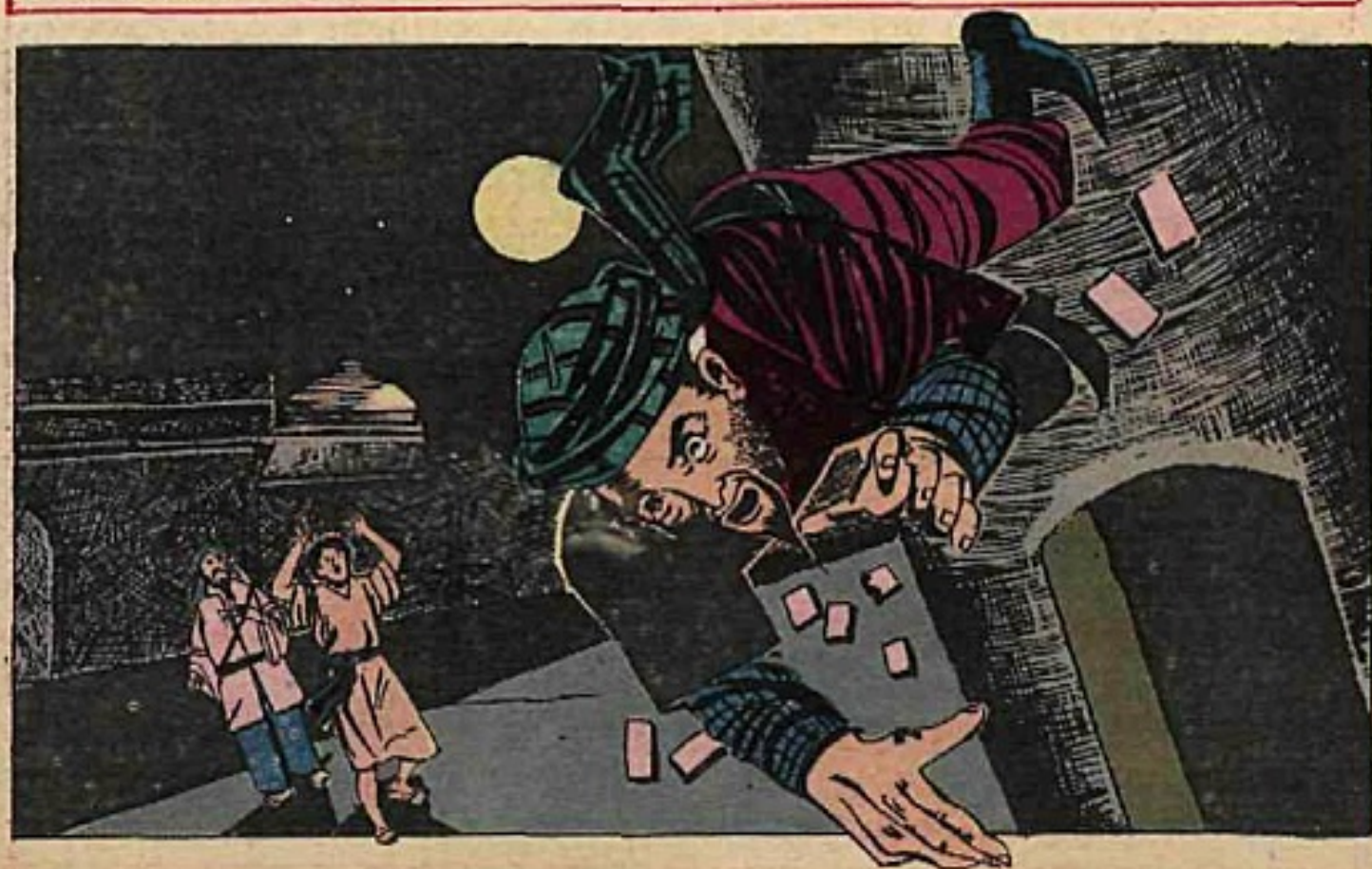
"What if we two are attacked?" asked the grandson.

"I can't help that!" replied the merchant. "I have to protect my money and property, after all!"

He began climbing the tower in darkness. He went midway and sat down on the crumbling bricks, then he thought that the top will be more safe. He laboured upwards.

He had just reached the top when he slipped. Down he came to a crushing death.

Next day the Sultan heard the incident and ordered that the old man and his grandson be given the property left by the merchant.





## KEPT IN THE DARK

**Badgers and moles spend much of their lives bringing up their families in homes they have constructed beneath the ground.**

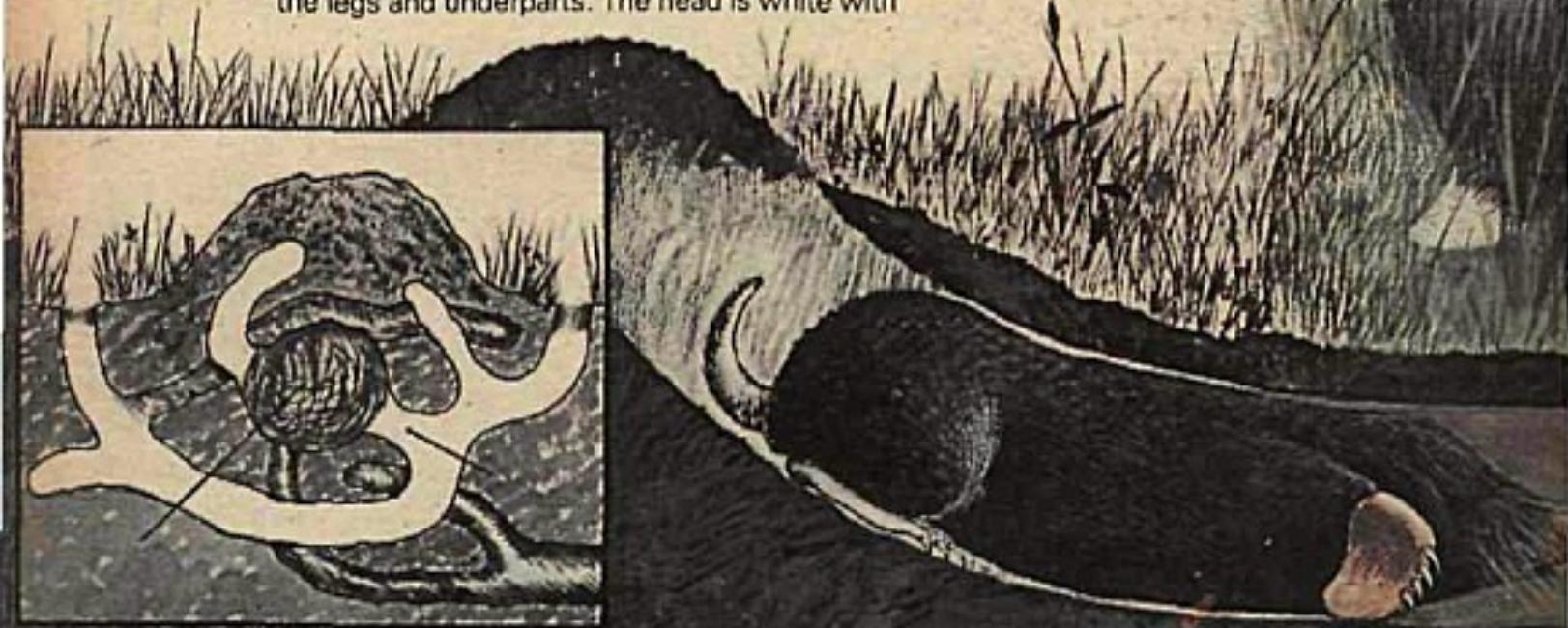
A stick was fixed across the entrance to an underground burrow, lightly wedged in the soil at the sides of the hole. The naturalist who had put it there felt that badgers were still using the set of which this was the entrance, but he had to be sure.

Next day, when he returned, he had his confirmation. The stick had been dislodged, and the naturalist knew that the set was still in use. That April night a gentle moonlight flooded the quarry where the hole was located, and the naturalist settled down to watch his evening's entertainment.

He was soon rewarded for his patience. Out of the burrow came a badger, a somewhat bear-like animal with a rolling gait. After him came the female, dragging out the bracken her family had used for bedding. And then came the youngsters, who soon began enjoying a rough and tumble near the entrance to their set.

There are usually several exits from a badger's set, but the main ones generally have well-worn paths leading from them, for it may be occupied for years.

The badger is a member of the weasel family. Its thick coat is grey on the back, and track on the legs and underparts. The head is white with





black stripes running down over the eyes towards the snout. Its tail and legs are extremely short; its forefeet are provided with strong, stout claws; and its jaws are so powerful that it can use them to grip like a bulldog.

After spending the day dozing, the badger

rouses itself at dusk and leaves its underground home to look for food. It eats roots and insects and small animals, and even prickly hedgehogs.

### PROTECTIVE COAT

It likes honey and digs out bees' nests from the ground, regardless of the attacks of the angry insects, since it is protected against their stings by its thick coat. The badger also enjoys the grubs that inhabit wasps' papery combs almost as much as it does honey.

If left in peace, the badger is a quiet, harmless animal. But if attacked, it will fight fiercely with teeth and claws, inflicting terrible wounds on its enemy. The badger itself usually escapes with very little injury, since few animals are able to make much impression on the badger's coat.

Badgers are usually born in the spring in underground nurseries prepared by the female. The young are blind and helpless at birth, but, as soon as they are able, they start to join their parents on nightly forays for food.

The American badger closely resembles its European cousin. But it is broader and flatter, and when it lies down it spreads itself out like a doormat. Its head is black, with a broad white stripe running from the top of its head to its nose, and another one down each cheek.

Once persecuted by sportsmen and gamekeepers, the badger—a beautiful, night-time wanderer of our countryside—is now afforded some protection under the law. So, between dusk and dawn, we may still have the chance of seeing it emerge from its underground home to begin its nightly hunt for food.

The mole is another underground dweller, which burrows not far below the surface in search of worms and grubs. The small heaps of earth, commonly seen on lawns, are cast out during burrowing.

The mole's nursery is much larger and usually made in an open field, but always near to a water supply. It consists of a central chamber a little below the surface, often surrounded by several galleries and tunnels. The nest chamber is lined with grass and leaves, and is apparently used only once. One litter is produced in a year, usually numbering three or four young ones born in May or June.

The mole spends most of its life unseen by man, a hardworking member of nature's army of subterranean toilers.





## MONKEYS AS GARDENERS

The king of Varanasi maintained a special garden full of rare plants and creepers. Great care was taken to nurture them and a very able officer was appointed as the chief gardener.

Close to the garden was a forest. A troop of monkeys lived in the forest, but they never harmed the garden. It was because the chief gardener had struck a deal with their chief. He gave the monkeys the freedom to do as they liked in the forest. Once in a while he even

gave them some bananas. The monkeys in their turn had cordially agreed to spare the garden.

It was the day of a festival. All the assistant gardeners and servants desired to go on leave so that they could attend the festival that was taking place a few miles away from the city. The chief gardener too felt the temptation to go.

The only problem was, on his way back from the festival, the king generally paid a visit to the





garden. How to leave the garden unattended just before the king's visit?

"You may go; I'll stay back," the chief gardener told his assistants and servants.

"Sir, you're being anxious for wrong reasons. By the time the king passes this way we all would have come back," said one of the assistants.

"But who will water the plants today? If they are not watered, they will look dull by tomorrow," reflected the chief.

"I've an idea. Why not we ask our monkey friends to do it? We will draw the water from the well and keep it stored in jars now. They will only pour it on

the plants in the afternoon," suggested another assistant.

"Hm." The chief gardener remained thoughtful. "Will it be wise to depend on monkeys, though they are faithful?"

"We can surely trust them for this much," they said all in a chorus.

The chief gardener summoned the troop of monkeys and told them what they were expected to do.

"It will be our privilege to do it," they said joyfully.

The garden staff left for the festival.

In the afternoon the monkeys began treating the plants with water. In the process of lifting





the jars they upturned half of them and wasted much water.

"The chief gardener had said that we should put only enough water for it to reach the roots of the plants. We don't have much water and so we cannot waste any. We must see how long are the roots of the different plants. Then we can decide how much water to use for each," said the monkey chief.

Immediately the monkeys began uprooting all the plants and creepers. They measured the roots and sprinkled water on them depending on their length.

But when they tried to set the uprooted plants right, they could not succeed. They kept on

trying very hard.

It so happened that the king reached the spot earlier than the garden staff. To his utter amazement and annoyance he saw a troop of monkeys making a mess of his precious garden. At the sight of the king and his party, the monkeys fled into the forest.

"Where are the gardeners?" asked the king.

The gardeners were back just then, needless to say, to face the angry king. They were punished with imprisonment. "All for the goodwill of the monkeys," said the chief gardener with a heavy sigh.







## ALL FOR A JACKFRUIT

**S**udhir was returning home from the office, but he was feeling unhappy. It was because his wife, Roma, had asked him for a jackfruit, but he had not been able to secure one. Roma was performing some Puja spread over three days. She had promised to offer a jackfruit to the deity. Two days had already passed. If he cannot find a jackfruit by tomorrow, Roma will consider her Puja fruitless. That will terribly depress her.

"Couldn't you find a jackfruit even today?" asked Roma the moment her eyes fell on Sudhir.

"No, but I have just heard of a weekly market outside the town. It is sitting today. I will go and I hope I'd find a jackfruit there," said Sudhir.

Roma looked happy. Sudhir soon left for the market. There was only one jackfruit with a

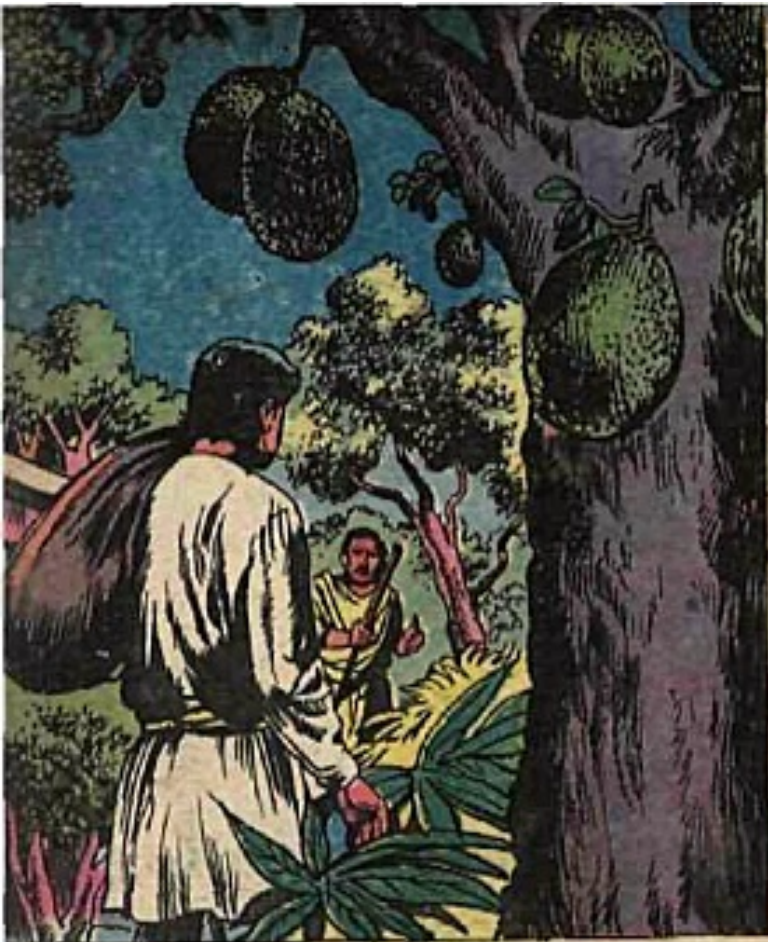
fruit-seller. But while Sudhir was haggling over its price, another customer promptly paid whatever the seller demanded and walked away with it. Probably he too needed it badly for a Puja!

Sudhir was new to the place. He did not know where else he could find a jackfruit. He was walking back to his home at a leisurely pace when he happened to look into the compound of a posh house. There were many trees bearing flowers and fruit. Among them stood a jackfruit-tree with a number of fruit hanging from it.

He crossed into the compound and tapped on the door of the house. A well-dressed lady opened the door with a frown.

"Your tree abounds in jackfruit. Can I buy one?" asked





Sudhir after courtesying to the lady.

"What did you say? Buy a jackfruit of us? How generous of you! But, for your information, we are not fruit-sellers. You may go." The lady showed him the way.

"Pardon me, but I am badly in need of one. If you won't sell one, give me one on loan. I promise to return a more plumpy jackfruit," said Sudhir entreatingly.

"Who is asking you for a more plumpy jackfruit? We are quite happy with our poor-quality ones. Now begone!" The

lady rudely shut the door on his face

Sudhir came out of the compound in a huff. Almost trembling with indignation, he took a grim decision: "I shall steal a jackfruit at night!" he told himself.

He came back home and said to Roma "I bought a jackfruit but I had to leave it at a friend's place because I carried no bag with me. I have an invitation for dinner at that friend's house. I shall bring the jackfruit along when I return after dinner. Don't worry if I am late."

He went out again in the early hours of the night, this time with a bag and a knife. He dined in a hotel and leisurely reached his destination on the outskirts of the town.

All was quiet. There was nobody to watch him. He scaled the wall surrounding the compound and went near the tree with cautious steps. He chose a ripe fruit and cut it off the tree and put it in his bag. But what he suddenly saw in the faint moonlight gave him the creeps! Someone crouched on the ground a few yards away and gazed at him. Sudhir found out that the man was digging a pit.



Sudhir thought of running away. But how far can he run? He must stop near the wall which he cannot climb swiftly. The man might shout and he may be caught.

He walked towards the man and said in a whisper, "I needed a jackfruit urgently and was ready to buy or take one on loan. But the lady of the house was very rude to me. That is why..."

"So you are the chap who met my wife this morning! Please don't mind her conduct. Why one, take two jackfruit!" said the man.

Sudhir understood that the gentleman was the head of the house.

"I am so glad to have your permission, sir, but what are you doing at this hour all alone?" he asked.

"That is a sad story. My wife had a pet cat. She left for her father's house a week ago asking me to look after the cat properly. This morning the cat saw a butterfly on my shawl and jumped to catch it. The shawl got torn. In a fit of anger I gave a beating to the cat. It fell dead. I put it in a bag and hid it. My wife was back this afternoon.



When she looked for her cat I told her that it was missing. She has refused to take food! I waited till she fell asleep. I must bury the cat now. Will you please help me in digging the pit a bit deeper?" said the gentleman.

"Gladly." Sudhir took the crowbar from the gentleman's hands and started digging.

Suddenly the door of the house opened and the gentleman's wife asked in a shrill voice, "What are you doing there? Enjoying moonlight, eh?"

"Let me go," the gentleman whispered to Sudhir, "Please





bury the cat which is in this bag and sneak away. By the way please take two jackfruit or even more if you want..."

The gentleman disappeared into his house. The door was closed.

Sudhir felt relieved. He buried the cat hurriedly and scaled the wall and walked towards his house. He was very happy with the success of his mission.

"Hey! What are you carrying at this unearthly hour?" Sudhir was confronted by two guards patrolling the streets.

"Nothing much; only a jackfruit," answered Sudhir.

"A jackfruit at midnight? We had never known such a lover of jackfruit!" said one of the guards and he gave a beating to Sudhir's bag.

"Miaow!" came the sound from the bag.

"Good God! Whoever had heard a jackfruit crying out like a cat!"

The guards opened Sudhir's bag a little and peeped in and found a cat inside. They looked at each other and looked at Sudhir with great surprise. Why should a fellow carry a cat at night? And why should he bluff saying that it was a jackfruit? The answers to these questions were beyond them.

Sudhir understood that he had bungled things, that he had buried the bag with the jackfruit instead of the bag with the cat!

"I think we should detain the fellow and produce him before the magistrate in the morning," one of the guards said. The other agreed.

Sudhir had to spend the whole night in the custody of the guards. In the morning he was led to the magistrate.

"Sir, this fellow was loitering in the streets at night. On being questioned by us, he said that he





was carrying a jackfruit, but what he was really carrying was a cat!" the guards reported.

Sudhir and the magistrate kept looking at each other with amusement. The magistrate was none other than the gentleman Sudhir had met at night.

Feigning gravity the magistrate told the guards, "Are you kids so naive that you don't understand the situation? Who but a wizard moves about at night with a cat? You may go away!"

After the guards left the magistrate burst into a laugh and said, "So, my friend; in your hurry you buried the jackfruit! I am grateful to you and

very happy that the cat is alive! My wife will be delighted to get back her pet."

The magistrate sent his servant to fetch a jackfruit from his garden. He patted Sudhir on the back and said, "Come again. We are now friends. I should narrate the whole comedy to my wife one day in your presence. She is moody and rather crude in her talk, but she is a good-hearted lady otherwise, you know!"

When Sudhir reached his home, the lady of the neighbouring house told him, "Where were you missing, son? Poor Roma has had such an anxious time!"

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## DEAFNESS CURED

Bibhutibhusan of Chandanpur was a famed moneylender. Unfortunately he had grown deaf since his childhood.

One day he heard that a sage who was camping in the bazar a few miles away, was dispensing miracle medicines for a variety of ailments.

The moneylender went to meet the sage. "Kindly cure me of my deafness," he said.

"What if you are deaf? Is your business not running all right?" the sage wrote down his question on a piece of paper.

But the moneylender insisted on curing his deafness and returned home with the medicine the sage gave.

A week later the moneylender was back with the sage.

"Can you now listen properly?" asked the sage.

"I can. But nobody knows that I can. I never heard what people say about me. Now, I hear what they say while paying me back my money or the interest. After listening to them for these few days I have lost interest not only in my business, but also in life. I have handed over the charge of my business to my sons and come away forever to be with you!" said the moneylender.





## THE FATEFUL PROPHECY

**I**n the later part of the World War II the Royal Air Force scattered tens of thousands of leaflets over the territories occupied by Germany. The leaflets contained some couplets written by a man who lived four hundred years ago.

How could those old couplets be relevant to the devastating war? Why were the British interested in distributing some verses among the people living in terror?

The verses bore the name of one Nostradamus as their author. Therein lay the magic!

Who was Nostradamus? He was a French physician of Jewish descent. He was born in 1503 and died in 1566. Towards the later part of his life he became famous as a man who made prophecies that came surprisingly true. His prophecies were given out in the form of verses, a hundred in a volume. The volumes were known as the





Centuries,

Many of his verses, because of their enigmatic language, cannot be properly explained. But some of them that were relatively simple proved awfully true—unless we dismiss them as cases of coincidence!

Here is one example. A verse of Nostradamus said:

The young lion will overcome  
the old one

On the field of battle in a  
single combat;

He will put out his eyes in a  
cage of gold;;

Two wounds, and then to die  
a cruel death.

Now, on the 1st of July 1559 a

gala carnival with a merry feast was going on in the palace of King Henry II of France. Two of the princesses were getting married, one to the King of Spain and the other to the Duke of Savoy.

A tournament was going on amidst great excitement. King Henry II himself was participating in a joust with the Count of Montgomery. They rode past each other on elegant horses attacking each other with lances. Each tried to topple the other.

The tournament was over. The royal guests who were witnessing it with enthusiasm de-





clared that it was a draw. But King Henry II insisted on having another round of the encounter.

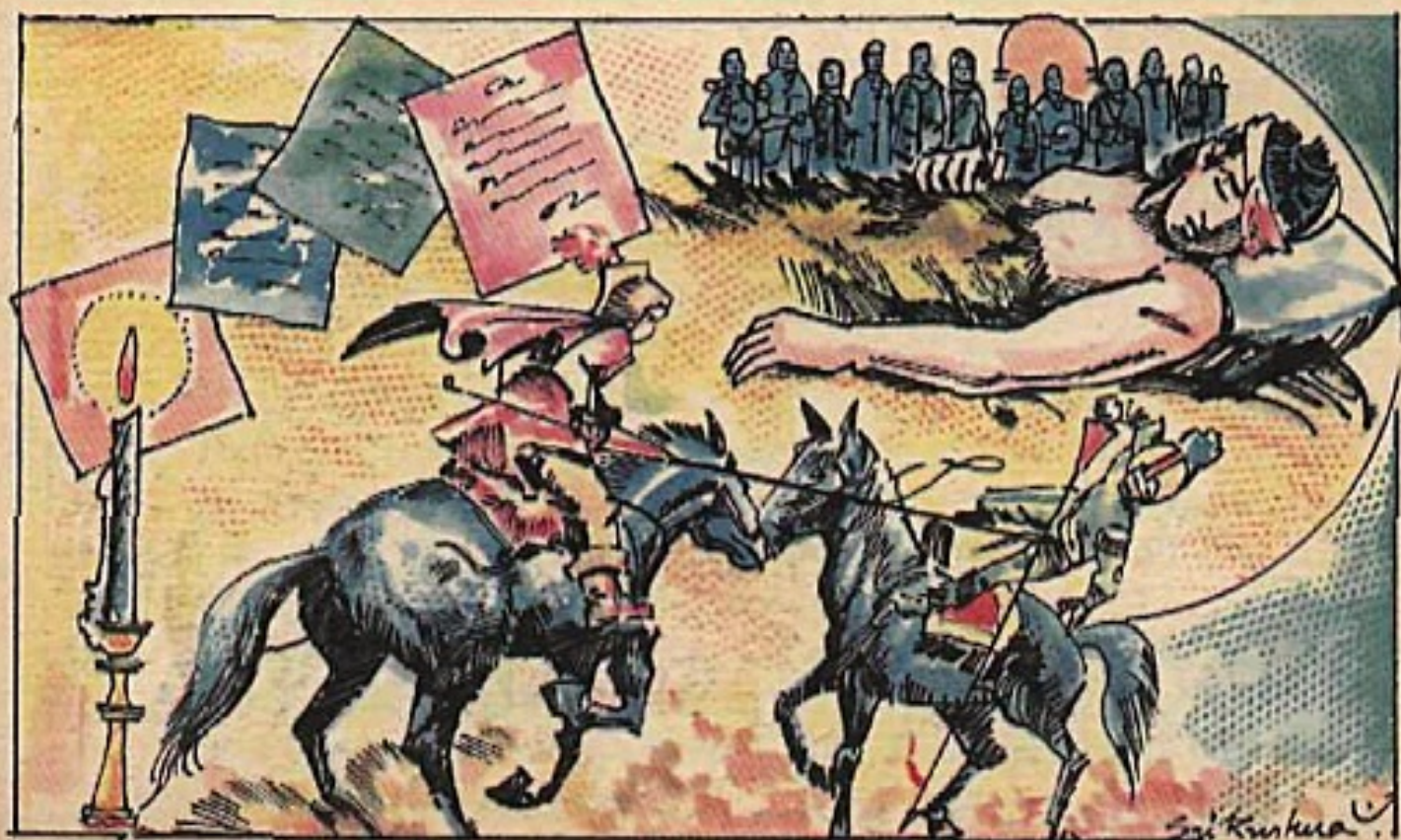
Willy-nilly the Count responded to the call. The second encounter was brief, for the Count's dazzling lance struck the king's golden visor (the part of the helmet covering his face), shattered it and pierced his eye and cut his temple. He fell down and took to bed. He died on the tenth day.

Imagine the surprise of the people who had read the verse by Nostradamus already quoted. Many were angry with him. They thought that the mis-

hap to the king was the result of the evil prophecy. It tempted the evil forces to do it!

Had Nostradamus really any mastery over some secret knowledge or was he a mere juggler with words? The issue is controversial.

Because people of Europe had developed faith in the prophecies of Nostradamus, the Germans had made fake verses and distributed them among the people of the lands they were attacking to serve their purpose. The British returned the trick by faking more verses and dropping them from the air to serve their purpose!







## SELLING THE SHADOW

**W**ho has not heard of Shur Singh of Raitpur in his area? This of course does not mean that he was great in any way. He was notorious for his greedy nature and his readiness to laugh at others' cost.

There was a big tree in front of his house. It gave cool shadow in the summer.

Once at a summer noon Shur Singh saw Jai Das, the farmer, relaxing under the tree. "Hello Jai!" shouted he, "Who gave you the permission to enjoy the shadow of my tree?"

"How are you a loser, Singh Sahib? If I am a little comfortable because of your tree, won't that add to your piety?" asked Jai.

"Who are you to measure my piety? My tree's shadow is my property. If you are so fond of it why don't you buy it off me?"

said Shur Singh.

"You wish to sell the shadow of your tree, do you? Well, what price do you expect?"

"Rupees fifty."

Jai Das called a few villagers. They put down their signatures as witnesses to a deed. According to that Jai Das became the owner of the shadow of the tree. He could sit in the shadow any time he liked.

A month passed. Jai Das was not seen enjoying the shadow even once. Shur Singh used to laugh thinking how foolish it was of the poor farmer to hand out fifty rupees to him for nothing!

One day he saw Jai Das seated leaning against his door "Why are you here?" asked Shur Singh haughtily.

"Don't shout like that. I'm enjoying the shadow which I





own!" replied Jai Das in a firm tone.

Shur Singh realised that the season had changed and the shadow now fell on his verandah. For the first time he developed a kind of fear for Jai Das.

Two more months passed. One day some gentlemen came to Shur Singh's house to finalise a marriage proposal. They were being entertained to meals. Suddenly Jai Das strode in and sat down amidst them. They looked surprised.

Shur Singh, however, was not surprised. He observed that the

shadow of the tree now covered that open space by the side of his house.

"My brother!" Shur Singh addressed Jai Das politely, "Will you please come aside and listen to me?"

Jai Das followed Shur Singh to a corner of the house, "My dear Jai, please do not mention a thing about your buying the shadow from me. Please sell the shadow back to me for a profit."

"No need of profit. Give me back the amount I gave you. That will do. It is enough for me that you have grown courteous!" said Jai Das and he went away.

### The Scholarly Patient

"Doctor!" the gentleman screamed at the physician in the morning, "I should advise you to make your statements a little elaborate. It seems you told my ill son last evening that you intended to take a blood test today. He has spent the whole night reading two books on blood preparing for the test!"



# THE BAN ORDER

Lavanyapuri was a town in the frontiers of the kingdom of Laksha. Once some outlaws struck terror in the town after the sunset. They harassed and stripped the people who were out on the roads of their valuables.

The Governor of the town passed orders prohibiting the citizens from coming out to the streets after the sunset.

As a result the theatres closed down. The shop-keepers went without business.

The king received a report of the situation. He wrote to the Governor, "You are very wise in passing the ban order. I congratulate you. However, I may suggest a slight change. The citizens have the right to make use of the roads even after the sunset. Hence the ban order should not be applied to them, but to the outlaws!"

The Governor felt ashamed. He mobilised his police force and did his best to fight and capture the outlaws. Soon normality returned to the town.







## STORY OF INDIA-88 TRANSITION AND TURMOIL

Early in the 19th century British were yet to consolidate their empire, and the Indian rulers were losing ground. There was chaos everywhere. Some part-time soldiers became professional plunderers. Known as the Pindaris, they looted the rich and the poor alike, causing terror mostly in Central India.

The British army fought the Pindaris. At last their Pathan leader Amir Khan accepted the British authority and was made the Nawab of Tonk. The other leader, Chittu, fled into forest and was devoured by a tiger. Thus ended the days of the Pindaris.



That was the time when the custom of "Sati" prevailed at many places. It had begun with some women of illustrious families sacrificing themselves in the funeral pyres of their husbands, out of sorrow or out of the faith that their souls will be united after death. By and by this had become a practice and many did it for sake of prestige. Lord Bentinck, the Governor General, forbade it by law.





In different parts of India gangs of bandits known as the Thugs were on the lookout for lonely travellers. They killed the travellers by swiftly strangling them and stole their property. Lord Bentinck succeeded in suppressing them.

People of some tribes were in the habit of sacrificing human beings in their fields under the impression that that will yield better crop. Lord Bentinck took firm steps to put an end to this practice. Thus he worked as a determined reformer.



While most of the Indian rulers were in their bad days, a new ruler was growing more and more powerful. He was Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1780–1839) of Punjab. He united the Sikhs who were divided into many sects under his able leadership. He was far-sighted and he became friendly with the British.



In 1846 Lord Dalhousie became the Governor General of India. After Ranjit Singh's death there were battles between the Sikhs and the British and Lord Dalhousie annexed Punjab. Then he went on expanding the British empire, from Peshawar to Burma.



Dalhousie made it a rule that any Indian ruler who died without a son would forfeit his territory to the East India Company. No ruler can adopt a son. He did not understand that this was a gross insult to the Indian tradition where an adopted son is considered equal to one's own son.

Among the kingdoms which passed on to the British under this arbitrary law were Nagpur, Sambalpur and Satara. In 1853 the Raja of Jhansi, died after adopting a son in the presence of the Rani, Lakshmi Bai. But Dalhousie declared that Jhansi was now owned by the British.

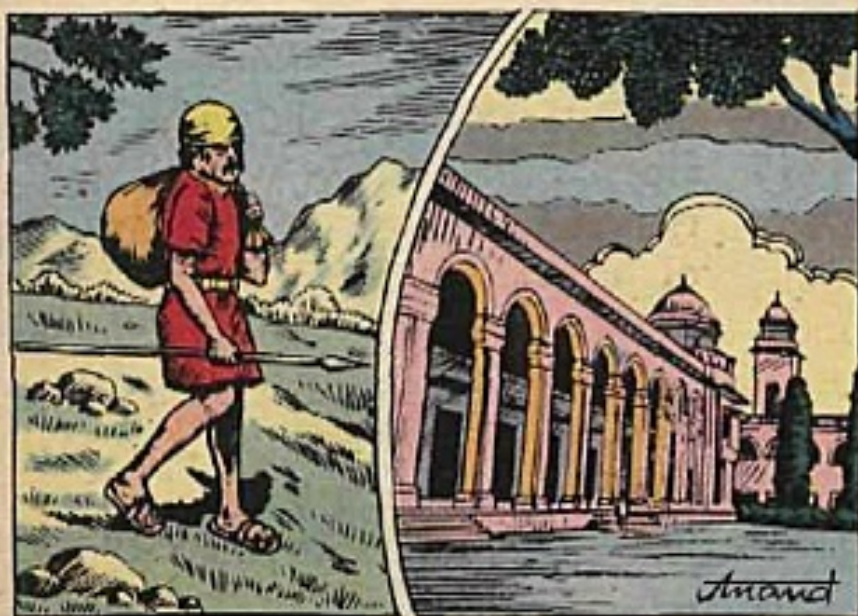






The same year Dalhousie refused to recognise Nana Sahib, the adopted son of the Maratha King Peshwa Baji Rao II, as the heir to the throne. Soon this was to turn Nana Sahib into a formidable enemy of the British.

While Dalhousie was an ambitious imperialist, he was also a lover of development. It was under his initiative that the 1st Indian Railway train service was inaugurated in 1853, between Bombay and Thana. It was a memorable event.



He also introduced the telegraph system in India. Next, he established the postal system with an uniform half-anna (about 3 paise) postage for the whole country. He also paved the way for the establishment of universities of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras.





## The Eligible Bachelor

**T**his happened quite some time ago. Aditya was appointed by the king as the manager of Shankarpur estate.

As soon as he arrived there the headmen of the villages came to greet him with gifts. His subordinate officers spoke among themselves, "Our boss must be a very capable person. Otherwise why should the king appoint a man of such young age to such an important post?"

Aditya felt very proud. He knew that only senior officers or elderly noblemen were appointed as managers of estates. No doubt he was intelligent, but he forgot that this quality of his was not the only reason for his getting the post. The fact is, his father once saved the king from attack by a bear in the forest. The gentleman was severely wounded himself in the

process and died. It was in recognition of his services that the king rewarded his son with a high position.

But Aditya forgot this. The flattery of the people made him believe that he was an exceptionally brilliant man indeed!

He grew more and more proud, though he did not show it.

Pride often makes people forget all about their old promises and obligations. Aditya had promised to marry Sumati, the daughter of a dear friend of his father's. Now he dreamt of marrying Chandrika, the daughter of his headclerk.

Sumati was a very good-natured and kind-hearted girl, but Chandrika was more beautiful than Sumati.

One day Kumar, a childhood friend of Aditya, arrived at





Shankarpur. "Aditya, you are lucky to get such a fine bungalow and the garden. Sumati can make a paradise out of it."

"Kumar, it is nice you came. Please inform Sumati's father that he can arrange for Sumati's marriage elsewhere!" said Aditya.

"What!" Kumar shrieked out his surprise, "Are you mad? How can you reject a girl like Sumati?"

Aditya smiled. Kumar got it out of him that he had seen a more beautiful girl than Sumati. "Your attitude is wrong," Kumar warned Aditya. But the warning did not have any effect.

Aditya was in the habit of walking a mile after dinner. Kumar gave him company. After Kumar left, Aditya continued in his habit, alone.

One night he saw two dark figures quarrelling over some issue on a deserted place outside the village.

"Who are you? What's the matter?" Aditya asked them.

"We are ghosts. The matter is, we cannot decide whether the colour of Vinodini is like that of gold or that of moonlight!"

Aditya received a jolt at knowing that he had fallen into the company of ghosts. But he showed no sign of nervousness.

"What is your opinion on the matter?" asked the ghosts.

"Well, I even don't know who Vinodini is!" murmured Aditya. "That is no problem," said the ghosts. Before Aditya could say or do anything, they lifted him in the air and carried him to the roof of a house.

With surprise Aditya saw in the moonlight a charming girl lying on a bedstead. He kept gazing at her. He did not know when the ghosts disappeared.

"A thief! A thief!" shouted the girl as she sat up.



"Please don't shout. I'm no thief, but an eligible bachelor! I was marvelling at your charm."

"A thief! A thief!" shouted the girl once again, unmindful of Aditya's explanation.

"Please have patience. You will be delighted to know that I am none but Aditya, the manager of this estate. I am charmed by you and—er—er—am willing to marry you!"

"Shut up, impertinent fellow! Why should I be delighted? How do I care if you are charmed by me? Have you seen yourself in a mirror? Rogue! You should be taught a lesson."

The girl then shouted for her brother.

Within a minute a strong and stout young man appeared there. He pounced upon Aditya and caught both his arms crossed backward and led him downstairs and threw him into a deserted room.

Aditya stood dumbfounded for a long time. Then he decided to somehow get out of the room before it was morning. He banged on the door. Some passers-by opened the door. They were people from a different village and did not recognise Aditya.



"How did you come into this haunted house, Babu?" they asked with some surprise and took to the road.

Aditya spent the day sulking. At night he armed himself with a stick and walked into the outskirts of the village and discovered those two ghosts.

"Why did you humiliate me last night?" he thundered, raising the stick.

"Be quiet, Babu, be quiet! Your stick can do no harm to us because we do not have bodies made of blood and flesh as you have."

Aditya lowered his stick. "But why don't you answer my





question?" he demanded.

"Do you have enough of good sense to appreciate our answer? Will you first tell us why you are in a mood to reject Sumati?"

The question was unexpected. Aditya had no answer ready.

"Is it not because Chandrika is more beautiful than Sumati? And did you not forget Chandrika the moment you saw Vinodini? What if you come across a more charming girl tomorrow? Where is the end to your fancy?"

Aditya stood with his head hung.

"You were charmed by Vini-

dini's beauty. But did she charm you by her words? Did you realise that much wrath and venom could be there in a charming face?"

This time Aditya nodded.

"Listen again. Any girl who is more charming than the one you had seen earlier fascinates you. What if the girl you choose grows fascinated for someone more charming than you? Will you be able to take that?"

Aditya blinked.

"Young man, should you not cultivate a better habit? Why not learn to like the inner qualities of a person? Why do you forget Sumati's virtues?"

"I won't forget again!" said Aditya in an apologetic tone.

"That is like a wise chap!" commented the ghosts and they disappeared in the dark.

Aditya galloped to Kumar's house the very next day.

"Kumar, why don't you fix up a date for my marriage?" he asked.

"But, Aditya, I don't like your choice of Chandrika!" said Kumar.

"Who is speaking of Chandrika? I'm asking you to arrange for my marriage with Sumati!"

"Excellent!" Kumar





embraced Aditya. He then said, "Tonight I'll introduce you to some of your well-wishers. Then I will meet Sumati's father."

Whom should Aditya meet at night but Mandakini, her brother, and the ghosts? He became conscious of the fact that his friend Kumar was the director of a famous drama troupe!

"Kumar! you wove such a

drama!" he exclaimed.

"I did. But are you firm in your decision to marry Sumati in spite of the disclosure?"

"Why not, Kumar? Truth is truth whether it came from ghosts or men. If I was willing to abide by the advice of ghosts, is it not more in fitness of things that I should abide by the advice of my human well-wishers?"

The two friends shook hands.

## WONDER WITH COLOURS







## MAGIC IN THE MUSIC

**T**he young king of Sonapur desired to learn music. Murlikrishna, the renowned singer in the court of Bhadrapur, agreed to visit Sonapur on week-ends to impart lessons to his royal student.

Whenever the young king sat down for practising his lessons, his ministers and his priest were seen sitting down cross-legged on the floor to listen to him. Soon the courtiers joined them. Before long the senior officers of the king's government too became his regular listeners.

As soon as the king would begin his practice, the listeners would begin to sway their heads and hands rhythmically. The

moment the king ended his session, they burst into enthusiastic comments: "Wah, wah! How wonderful!"

They would disperse showing great reluctance. That is to say, they would leave only after the king had seen each one of them.

One day the king asked his court-jester, "I think there is magic in my music. What do you say?"

"No doubt, Your Majesty, there is!" said the jester.

"What is that magic, my friend?" asked the king.

"It is not safe for me to speak that out."

The king laughed. "I know as you know. It is my position.



There must be hundreds of singers in our kingdom much superior to me. But they don't possess that magic!"

"Your Majesty, you know the truth. Why then do you allow these people to neglect their official duties and idle away their time here?" asked the jester.

"You see, at first the minister and the priest gathered to listen to me. They belong to my father's generation and they are respectable. I could say nothing to them. They were joined by the courtiers. If I forbid them, they might ask: do the ministers and the priest understand music better than they do? So I am keeping mum!" explained the king.

The jester whispered to him something.

As usual the listeners col-

lected there as soon as the king began practising his music the next day.

The king greeted them and then said, "Gentlemen, my practice of music and your practice of appreciating my music began at the same time. But you have far surpassed me in your line of practice. I can understand this by observing your nods and the movement of your other limbs. They are much more rapid now than they used to be at the beginning. Naturally there has developed a gap between your status and my status in regard to music. I suggest that let us part. You may concentrate on your duties!"

Those who were intelligent understood the king's sarcasm. The others felt flattered. In any case they dispersed and that is all the king had wanted!





## CURED BY AN OGRESS



If Viresh was most idle, his wife Vimla was most timid. These two defects in the couple created a lot of problems. Otherwise they were so good!

Vimla worked hard and cultivated a small but excellent orchard beside her house. One day she insisted that her husband carry a bunch of bananas to the bazar, for it was expected to fetch a much higher price there than it would in the village. "Buy a mirror if you receive enough money to pay for it," Vimla told him.

Very reluctantly Viresh went to the bazar. He sold the bunch at a good profit and bought a

mirror. But he felt too lazy to take to the long road back to the village. So, he entered a forest through which lay a short-cut.

It was late in the afternoon and he felt sleepy. He lay down under a tree.

It so happened that the particular tree was the dwelling of an ogress. The ogress who was asleep in the tree suddenly woke up when Viresh's mirror reflected sunlight on the face. She jumped down. Viresh stood up with a start! The sudden appearance of the ogress before him made him nervous. He held up the mirror to hide his face from the stare of the ogress.

"Say that! You are an ogress like me! Good. But how could you make your body like that of a human being? I would like to learn that trick. I will like to move about among the human beings!" said the ogress. She had mistaken her own reflection in the mirror to be the face of



Viresh.

Viresh got back his courage. He removed the mirror.

"I see, you can change yourself to a male human being at wish! I knew ogresses can do that, but I do not know the magic myself! Please impart the lesson to me."

"Don't worry. I will do the needful. But before you can be eligible to learn that magic, you have to learn many more things. You have to behave like human beings—bathe, trim your nails, comb your hair, so on and so forth!" said Viresh.

"I'll do everything you ask me to do. Please come here every

day and teach me the lessons."

"I'll do that. But you see, I live like a human being among true human beings. I have a home and a wife. How can I come everyday?" asked Viresh.

"If you don't, I will find out your home and kill you and your wife!" roared the ogress.

"All right, sister, all right, I'll come."

Viresh did not say a word of the encounter to his wife because he knew that the news would terrify her. But next day he reported in the forest and found the ogress looking quite fresh. She had taken a bath in the river, had trimmed her nails





and combed her hair.

"Good. Human beings walk slowly and rhythmically like this," said Viresh, showing her how to walk. She followed him step by step.

After an hour Viresh took leave of her.

"Come tomorrow, or I'll..."

"I'll come, I'll come," promised Viresh.

Viresh had to come day after day to teach the ogress how to speak, how to smile, how to address others etc. Vimla was happy that her lazy husband had suddenly become active. But try as she may, she could not find out the nature of his activity.

She got suspicious and on the fifth day she followed her husband stealthily.

The forest scared her, but she was determined to find out the secret of her husband's activity.

Viresh duly reached the shadow of the tree and the ogress greeted him. "Today you must teach me how to sing," she pleaded with Viresh.

"Very well." Viresh sat down and began to sing.

Vimla was hiding behind a bush. She could not see the face of the ogress. All she understood was, Viresh was entertaining an unknown woman to a song! She burst out of the bush,





broke a branch from a nearby tree and rushed upon the two.

Viresh looked back and was startled to see his wife advancing towards him menacingly. He ran. The ogress, who took Virsh to be a member of her own species, thought it wise to run too, for the one who was attacking them must have been more ferocious than an ogress!

Soon the ogress outran both and disappeared into the deepest part of the forest, but not before Vimla had had a glimpse of her figure. She stopped. Viresh too stopped.

Vimla began to weep.

Slowly Viresh came closer to her and said, "Vimla, you must listen to me patiently. You have seen that she was an ogress. It is out of fear that I had to teach her some lessons." He narrated to her all that had happened. Vimla understood and smiled



through her tears.

"I should be happy that the ogress made you get over your laziness," she commented.

"Should I not be happy that the ogress made you get over your fear?" observed Viresh.

Both laughed and returned home.

### In Postal Transit

Mrs. Rao: Why did the postman gave you a bouquet?

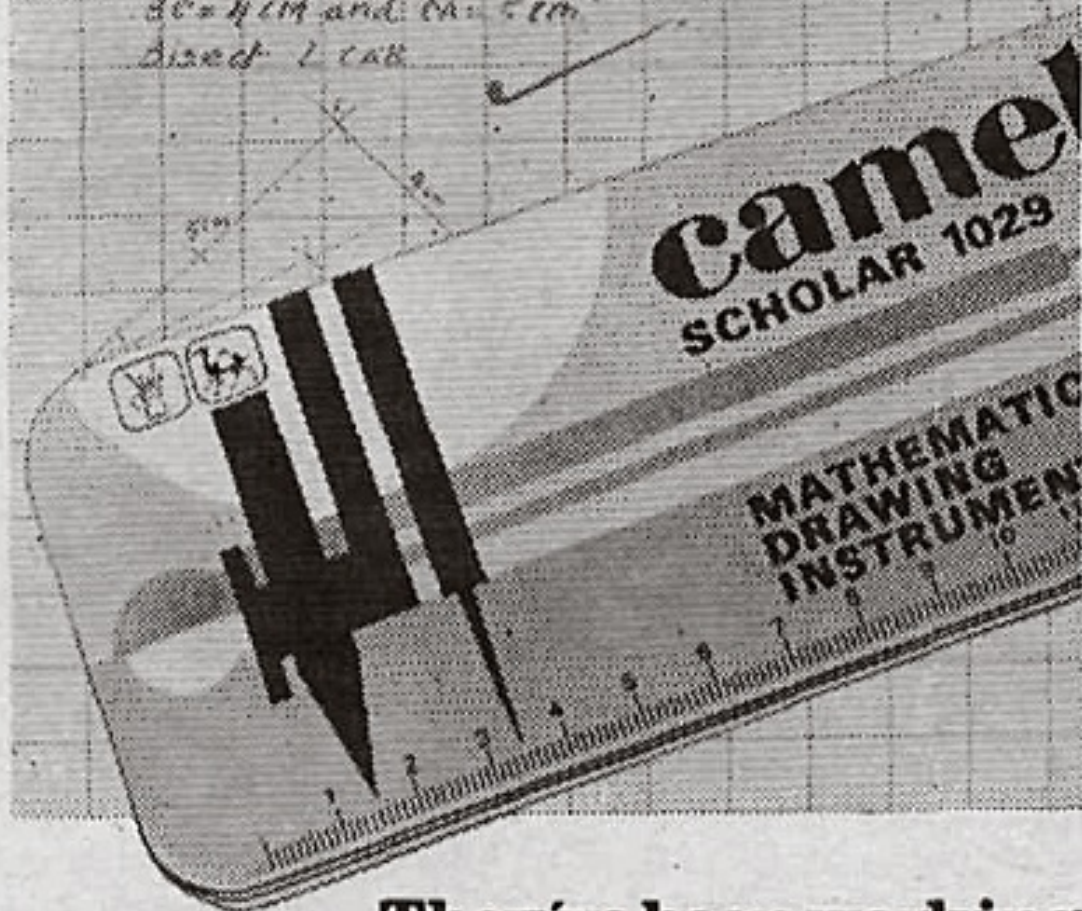
Miss Jain: My brother had posted me a packet of flower-seeds. It happened on the way...





*Construct a triangle ABC*  
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*BC = 4 cm and CA = 5 cm  
Draw a line*



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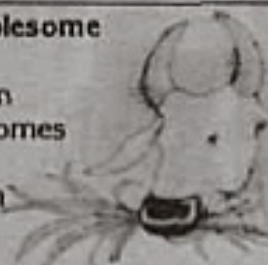
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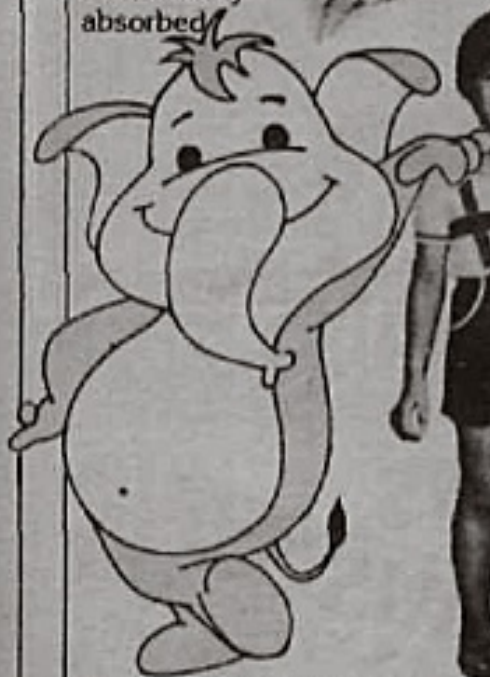
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# Ram & Shyam

## IN THE PENTAGON LESSON

PARLE



AUNTY, WE HOPE ALL'S WELL WITH TINA...

OH, POOR TINA'S VERY ILL. DO COME AND CHEER HER UP!



HI TINA! WHATEVER HAPPENED?

IT'S THESE SILLY SWEETS I ATE...



HOW COULD YOU, TINA? THESE ARE NOT REAL POPPINS!

BUT, RAM, THE SILVER STRIPES ARE HERE AS IN POPPINS!



IT'S VERY SAD. SOME IMITATORS HAVE STARTED COPYING THE SILVER STRIPES TOO!

BUT, TINA, WHY DIDN'T YOU LOOK FOR THE NAME P-A-R-L-E IN A BLUE PENTAGON? THEN, ALSO SPELL OUT P-O-P-P-I-N-S?



RAM AND RAM SHOW TINA THE NAME ON THE REAL POPPINS ROLL.

SO NEXT TIME, REMEMBER. FIRST CHECK THE SILVER STRIPES...

THEN, THE PARLE NAME IN A BLUE PENTAGON—TO MAKE DOUBLY SURE!



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